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Staff photo by Barry Taglieber

Michael DeMonte, Dave Hall, Ed Seaman and Clint Weiler, above, show off the warehouse for MVD Entertainment Group, a leading music DVD distributor, in Oaks.

MVD Entertainment enjoys success

By DENNIS J. WRIGHT
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OAKS — With the addition of an audio division earlier this year, MVD Entertainment Group in Oaks has solidified its reputation as a world leader in the distribution of music DVDs.

According to Ed Seaman, chief operating officer, this family-run business began 20 years ago with the hard work of his father, Tom.

"My father has been in the music business since

the '60s," said Ed Seaman. "His father George used to own a record store in New York called Record Hunter. My family moved from New York in the 70s to work for Sam Goody, who obtained Franklin Music. My father started their merchandise division. In 1986, he started this company. What he envisioned with the big picture disc back in the day is that you could see music as well as hear it. Some people thought he was crazy, but that was his focus — to see

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Staff photo by Barry Taglieber

Workers at MVD Entertainment Group pull music video from the shelves at their Oaks base storage area for shipping.

MVD

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Ed said his father had a long-time supplier list he accumulated over the years that was beneficial in the beginning.

"He had this list and when the DVD business took off, things exploded for us," he said. "The music DVD has more exposure than videos on MTV and VH1. We began finding more partners, both internationally and in North America."

Ed said he joined the family business after beginning his career as a restaurant manager in the late 80s.

"My father invited me to come on board," he said. "Back then, it was four family members and one other person. I began my day unloading merchandise, and then get on the phone for orders. We started to expand in 1989 and now we have a good core group of people."

Along with Ed and Tom, other family members involved in MVD include Tom's wife, Elinor Seaman as treasurer, and Ed's sister, Evie Edwards as chief financial officer. Key members of MVD include Michael DeMonte as vice president of sales, Dave Hall as vice president of operations, Zach Fischel as vice president of marketing and Clint Weiler as director of publicity.

Formerly known as Music Video Distributors, Inc., MVD Entertainment Group currently consists of three major divisions — MVD Visual, MVD Distribution, and now MVD Audio.

Since 1999, MVD Visual has released over 500 titles, and is one of the largest producers of music DVDs in 2006. MVD Visual specializes in producing, releasing, marketing, and distributing music-related DVDs for worldwide release.

MVD Visual has an unparalleled focus on music DVDs, which allows for aggressive marketing, publicity, promotion, and sales. Having released over 500 titles since 1999, recent releases include "Loud Quiet Loud — A Film about The Pixies" and "Queen Under Review 1980 - 1991."

MVD Distribution is a one-stop for music DVDs, carrying the best selection of the format in the world, and further offering a very large selection of non-music DVDs. MVD Distribution executes the physical fulfillment of its products (including MVD Audio and MVD Visual), servicing major chains, distributors, one-stops, online retail, and independent retail.

MVD Audio handles exclusive distribution and representation for audio content on CD. MVD Audio already has content agreements with several record labels including Inakustik (Germany), Secret Records Ltd. (UK), and Metal Mind Productions (Poland) as well as many independent artists. MVD Audio expects to release about 100 CDs by the end of 2006.

With a 20,000-square-foot

warehouse with both music and non-music DVDs, Ed said that MVD tends to lean more on music DVDs.

"We do buy and sell content that we will represent solely," he said. "We do fulfill orders to our customers, and nothing illegal. We don't make value judgments about pornography. As long as it's legal, we'll consider the content and decide whether we'll distribute it or not. We tend to lean more on music DVDs."

"DVDs go through a screening process. We've been generally on the money on what we select to distribute. As far as production, we've been given content to turn it into a DVD. We've been doing this for years. The production side has been vibrant, and it's to the point where we are looking at particular bands to make a music DVD."

Weiler said that MVD has been having its most prolific year ever in terms of amount of releases.

"For the year, we released the second-most music DVDs in North America compared to any other supplier," said Weiler. "We are only one out by a little company called Universal. Over all we are fourth on the list, and on track to overcome Image next year and be the number three producer." Ed Seaman added, "The main competition is scattered in their approach. We are focused on DVDs. We have our own legal team and make our own decisions. We do it when we decide to do it. We have a great team that gets the job done. This is our niche and our specialty."

One DVD that MVD recently released is a live DVD from the band Bad Brains called "Live CBGBs 1982." Back on Christmas Eve 1982, Bad Brains began a three-day stint at a hardcore festival hosted by the legendary club CBGBs.

"We felt we had something special with Bad Brains and their show at CBGBs," said Ed. "We were presented this footage by one of their managers, and we gladly went for it. There are certain acts that have an X factor and people will buy whatever is put out by the band."

Weiler said that he and Ed did a pre-screening of the DVD in New York a few months ago.

"We wanted to have it in CBGBs but it was a bar close to it," he said. "The crowd was really into it and we felt like we struck gold that night."

The one band that Ed said he'd like to distribute a DVD about is the legendary Kinks.

"I'd love to someday put out something spectacular about the Kinks," he said. "There hasn't been anything put out that has properly documented their early years. Before that, it was the New York Dolls, but we managed to get them and put out something great on them."

MVD Entertainment Group is located at 4840 North Creole Boulevard, Oaks. Their phone number is 610-650-8200. Their Web site is www.MVD2b.com.

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